



DNREC – FISH & WILDLIFE

LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO 7 DE ADMIN CODE 3531 TAUTOG; SIZE LIMITS, CREEL LIMITS AND SEASONS

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)/ Division of Fish & Wildlife proposes to amend Delaware's tidal finfish regulations pertaining to tautog (7 **DE Admin Code** 3531 Tautog; Size Limits, Creel Limits and Seasons). The proposed measures maintain compliance with Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Tautog. Specifically, Amendment 1 requires that Delaware implement recreational and commercial management measures consisting of a 16-inch minimum size limit, a four fish possession limit and a closed season from May 16 through June 30. In addition, based upon evidence from law enforcement officials that indicated significant illegal sales of tautog, states with commercial tautog fisheries must implement a commercial harvest tagging program by January 1, 2019. Implementation of such a program will require preregistration, harvest tagging and tag reporting and accountability measures to deter the illegal sale of tautog. Finally, to prevent or reduce mortality from lost commercial fishing gear, Amendment 1 requires certain degradable materials on pot and trap gear from which tautog are retained.

The required minimum size limit, possession limit and closed season are currently in place through emergency Secretary's Order 2018-F-0035. However, these measures and the other proposed measures must be promulgated through the full provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act. The proposed amendments may be inspected at the Department's offices located at 89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901, or are available by contacting the Fisheries Section at (302) 739-9914.

A public hearing on the proposed amendments will be held August 23, 2018 at 6:00 PM in the DNREC Auditorium, located at the Richardson & Robbins Building, 89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901.

The hearing record on the proposed amendments to 7 **DE Admin Code** 3531 will open August 1, 2018. Individuals may submit written comments or request additional information regarding

the proposed amendments via e-mail to Lisa.Vest@state.de.us or via the USPS to Lisa Vest, Hearing Officer, DNREC, 89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901 (302) 739-9042.

THIS IS THE ONLY TIME THIS NOTICE WILL APPEAR.